

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Standards Committee was held on 9 June 2009.

PRESENT: G Fell (Chair);
Councillors Carter, Elder, C Hobson, Khan and McPartland
Independent Members: G Fell and C J Nestor.
Parish Council Members: Councillors I Bruce and B Macmillan.

OFFICERS: M Braithwaite and C Davies.

**** APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were submitted on behalf of Councillors Davison and Taylor and Prof. B. Footitt OBE

APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

ORDERED that Chris Nestor be appointed Vice-Chair of the Standards Committee for the municipal year 2009/2010.

****DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest at this point of the meeting.

**** MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 10 March 2009 were taken as read and approved as a correct record.

MEMBERS IT PROTOCOL

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services presented a report in relation to the Members' IT Protocol. A copy of the proposed Members' Protocol on the use of Council IT, E-Mail and Internet Facilities was attached at Appendix 1 to the submitted report.

The Constitution Committee approved the draft protocol subject to its circulation to all Members. The attached draft incorporated the comments and suggestions received and, subject to any additional changes by the committee would be forwarded to the Corporate Affairs Committee for final approval.. The draft Protocol would replace the version currently contained in the Members' Handbook.

RECOMMENDED that the Members' Protocol on the use of Council IT, E-Mail and Internet Facilities attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

APPEALS TRIBUNAL DECISION – COUNCILLOR J MCTIGUE – CASE REF: APE 0421

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted details of the decision of the Appeals Tribunal held on 29 April 2009. The Adjudication Panel considered an appeal by Councillor McTigue against the decision of the Standards (Hearings) Sub-Committee of 22 January 2009 to impose a two month period of suspension following a complaint from a member of the public regarding the Councillor's behaviour.

The Appeals Tribunal supported the sub-committee's finding that Councillor McTigue had breached the Code of Conduct and its decision to impose a two month suspension from the Council. The Tribunal also determined that Councillor McTigue should undertake 1-2-1 training within three months of the date of the hearing. Arrangements were being made with one of the national providers of standards training for the required training to take place before the end of July.

NOTED

REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM POLITICAL RESTRICTION

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report requesting the committee to approve a request for the post of User/Carer Support Services Manager within the Social Care service to be removed from the list of 'sensitive' posts subject to political restriction. The committee is authorised to carry out the function, previously undertaken by an Independent Adjudicator, under powers conferred by Section 3A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

The reasons submitted by the present post holder for exemption were:

- that the post did not involve, as defined under the Local Government (Politically Restricted Posts) (No.2) Regulations 1990, the giving of advice on a regular basis to the authority, its committee or sub-committee or individual member or
- involve the need to speak to the media on behalf of the authority.

A copy of the letter of request, the job description and person specification for the post were attached as appendices to the report together with letter of support for the request received from the Head of Performance and Planning.

ORDERED that the post of User/Care Support Services Manager be exempted from the political restriction requirements of the Local Government (Politically Restricted Posts) (No.2) Regulations 1990.

ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF STANDARDS COMMITTEES

The Committee received details of the 2009 Annual Assembly of Standards Committees to be held on 12th and 13th October 2009 at the International Convention Centre, Birmingham. Members were asked to consider nominations for attendance.

ORDERED that Councillor Elder and Councillor Carter be authorised the above event. Should they be unable to attend, the vacant place be offered initially to Councillor C Hobson, Mr C Nestor or any other member of the committee who had not attended a previous event.

DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS 2009/2010

Meetings of the Committee to be held during remainder of the 2009/2010 municipal year were noted as follows:

10.00 a.m. Tuesday 8 September 2009,
10.00 a.m. Tuesday 8 December 2009,
10.00 a.m. Tuesday 9 March 2010.

NOTED